

The Element of Style

- William Strunk Jr.

1) Place yourself in the background.

→ Write without drawing attention to yourself. Focus on the content, not your feelings. Good writing naturally show your personality. Style develops with language mastery. Writing connects minds & hearts, rebirthing thoughts.

2) Write in way that come naturally.

→ Uses words & phrases that come readily to hand, might be have flaws.

→ Language learning start with imitation

→ Even skilled writer continue to imitate unconsciously.

→ It's okay to admire & be influenced by good writing.

3) Work from a suitable Design.

→ Before starting a project, understand its scope.

→ Every creation, wheather a tent or a cathedral, begins with a vision.

→ Having a plan is crucial, even if it's not a formal blueprint.

→ For simple task like making a list, you can work directly without much planning.

→ For complex task like writing a biography, having a rough plan is essential.

→ Sometimes, emotions override planning, especially in heart felt letters.

→ Even seemingly spontaneous writing usually has an underlying plan or direction, like columbus sailing west to find the new world.

4) Write with nouns & verbs:

- Adjective & adverb should not overshadow the importance power of nouns and verbs.
- Nouns and verb provide toughness & color to good writing.

5) Revise & rewrite:

- serious flaws require transposition.
- Utilize word processors for easier rearrangement.
- Experiment is encouraged.
- It's common for manuscript to undergo surgery.

6) Avoid Overwriting:

- Ornate prose can be difficult to understand & unwholesome.
- Guard against wordiness, especially when writing with a computer.
- Delete unnecessary words or passages.

7) Do not Overstate:

- Overstating diminishes credibility and trust in the author.
- A single overstatement can weaken the entire piece.
- Careless use of superlatives can harm the reader's perception.

8) Avoid use of qualifiers:

- Words like "rather", "very", "little", and "pretty" weaken prose.
- The constant use of "little" is particularly harmful.

9) Do not adopt a breezy manner:

- Windy writing lacks substance & depth.
- Avoid egocentric writing that assumes general interest in personal experiences.
- Use straightforward language & avoid unnecessary slang or humor.
- Focus on presenting information in a clear & unpretentious manner.

- 10) Use orthodox spelling:
- Avoid using non-standard like "nite" for "night" unless part of a comprehensive simplified spelling system.
 - Language evolves, but unnecessary complexities distract readers.
 - Example: "thru" for "through" in "thru-way" is accepted due to practicality.
- 11) Do not explain too much:
- Avoid excessive adverbs after attributive verbs in dialogue.
 - Let conversation reveal the speaker's manner rather than over-explaining.
 - Cluttered dialogue with adverbs disrupts flow.
- 12) Do not construct awkward adverbs:
- Avoid unnecessary adverbs, especially those not commonly used in speech.
 - Opt for simpler alternatives for clarity & effectiveness.
- 13) Make sure the reader knows who is speaking:
- Clearly attribute dialogue to avoid confusion.
 - Attributives should naturally fit within the speech pattern.
- 14) Avoid Fancy Words:
- Use Anglo-Saxon words over Latin ones for a livelier language.
 - Fancy words can detract from clarity and may not always be suitable.

- 15) Do not use dialect unless your ear is good:
- Avoid using dialect unless prominent in it.
 - If used, maintain consistency and ensure phonetic spelling.
- 16) Be Clear:
- Clarity is paramount in writing.
 - Ambiguity can lead to misunderstanding and confusion.
- 17) Do not Inject Opinion:
- Avoid inserting personal opinions unless relevant & necessary.
 - Gratuitous opinions can detract from the main message.
- 18) Use figures of speech sparingly:
- Similes and metaphors should enhance, not overwhelm, the writing.
 - Avoid excessive use that may distract readers.
- 19) Do not take shortcuts at the cost of clarity:
- Avoid using initials for organization or movements unless widely understood.
 - Prioritize clarity over brevity.
- 20) Avoid foreign languages:
- Minimize the use of foreign expression to maintain reader comprehension.
 - Write primarily in English to ensure accessibility.